

Whether Common or Not.



The Playground Democracy.

Underneath the spreading maple happy children
meet and play,
And I love to sit and watch them in the closing
hours of day.
Watching them my thoughts will wander to the
happy days gone by
When I, with the neighbors' children, counted out
to play "I spy."

Oney, orry, ickery, Ann,
Fillison, follison, Nicholas, John;
Queevy, quavey, English navy,
Rinktum, linktum, buck.

And I long to run and join them, long to be a boy
again;

Long to lay aside the burdens borne by tired, busy
men.

And my blood leaps fast and faster, and I clap my
hands and shout

When 'midst merry peals of laughter my own boy
is counted out.

Eeny, meeny, miny, mo,
Catch a nigger by the toe;
If he hollers let him go,
Eeny, meeny, miny, mo.

Thus the summer hours speed swiftly as the child-
ish games are played

In my back yard by the children gathered 'neath
the maple's shade.

Dancing feet and happy laughter make the hours
speed with haste,

And the back yard knows no rulers, knows no
pride of birth or caste;

For upon an equal footing were they gather, girls
and boys,

And I sit and envy them their healthy lungs and
childish joys.

Wire, briar, limber, lock,
Three geese in a flock;
One flew east, one flew west,
One flew over the cuckoo's nest.

Pure democracy exists there, all for one and one
for all,

Flitting here and romping yonder 'neath the green-
leaved maple tall.

And I wonder as I watch them why men grasp for
gold and fame,

Missing all the joys of living, risking misery and
shame.

Monkey, monkey, bottle of beer,
How many monkeys have we here?
One, two, three,
Out goes he.

O, that men might learn the lesson! Be from
greed and passion free,

Like the happy children playing underneath the
maple tree.

A Case of Coercion.

The old gentleman gazed admiringly at the
little boy dressed in the latest style and wearing
beautiful golden curls down his shoulders.

"Ah, my little man," said he, "I love to see
little boys like you whose faces shine with inno-
cence and whose bearing is evidence of gentleness
and love."

"Aw, come off de dump, ol' snooks! W'ot yer
givin' me? D'ye t'ink I'm wearin' dis Little Lord
Fauntleroy outfit 'cause I like it?"

"I am enjoying this hugely!" exclaimed Mr.
Bildad, as he closed out all of his suits and began
throwing hearts upon his wife's leads. "I think
there can be nothing more enjoyable than husband
and wife sitting down to a quiet game of cards at
home, with nothing to disturb them and nothing
but peace and—now where in the name of sense
did you get that trey-spot? That was played three
hands ago. No it wasn't the deuce, either. I
played that trey on your six-spot. Not on your

life, madam! If you can't play this game without
resort to tricks that would put a professional gam-
bler to blush you needn't expect me to play with
you! That trey was played on your seven lead.
Blamed if I'll play any more. A man has a right
to expect when he sits down to play cards with his
wife merely to please her and not because he wants
to play that the game will be honest and fair.
I'm going down to the club."

As Mr. Bildad's footsteps died away in the dis-
tance Mrs. Bildad picked up the hand Mr. Bildad
had laid down and noted the seven of hearts
therein. She smiled as she remarked:

"The poor, dear man is so worried about his
business affairs that he really does not know what
he is doing half the time."

A La Mode.

The poet in fine frenzy strode,
Composing a beautiful ode.

He climbed the long stair
To the editor's lair—

And a few moments later it snowed.

Thoroughly Civilized.

Not until John Chinaman spoke did we realize
that he was thoroughly imbued with our western
civilization.

"I know what 'A. D.' means in your Christian
calendar," he said.

Naturally we asked him what he thought it
meant.

"It means 'All Demanded,'" said John.

How could we longer doubt that he was thor-
oughly civilized after this evidence of research
among our comic publications?

English as She is Spelled.

A man bought an automobile,
A beautiful steed made of stile.

With crude gasoline
He propelled the machine,
And mile after mile he did rife.

The Disagreeable Man.

"It makes me tired to read the remarks made
by men who try to explain why more girls than
boys are graduated from our high schools," said
the Disagreeable Man.

Of course we had to ask him why.

"The boys don't dig and study with the idea
of appearing before admiring friends in a costume
made up of a lot of fluffy stuff with their hands
full of roses and ribbons," said he.

While we did not say so, we felt quite sure the
Disagreeable Man had flunked on his final examina-
tion.

Sized Up.

"What kind of a fellow is that Mr. Blank who
was visiting you last week?"

"Well, Blank sings first tenor in the town
quartette."

The Lucky Auto.

The wornout horse thrust his head over the
top rail of the fence as the gaudy automobile went
sailing by.

"You are far luckier than you realize," solilo-
quized the horse. "Your owners do not torture
you with blind bridles and overhead check-reins."

Then the horse returned to his grass, ponder-
ing on the unthinking cruelty of mankind.

—W. M. M.

No More Franchises.

After all, the right thing to do is always easier
than the wrong thing to do; it is only the wrong
thing to do that is truly tortuous and hard. The
plain, straight path goes the best.

Courage to walk straight ahead is better than
genius.

This is just as true of municipalities as of indi-
viduals. As observe:

Two months ago some excellent citizens of

Chicago and some that were not so excellent were
in a state of natural excitement about the traction
situation—which certainly did look pretty bad.

The legislature was about to adjourn without
doing anything to help municipal ownership or
taking any interest in the traction needs of the
city.

The franchises of the companies would expire
in about two years and the city was apparently be-
tween two imminent dangers: to have the present
wretched conditions prolonged for many years by
the renewal of existing franchises or to be with-
out a street car service.

In this emergency the excellent and other citi-
zens, including the street railway commission,
counselled surrender to the companies on the best
terms obtainable.

"They will get their franchises anyway," was
the argument. "It is better to give it to them for
some advantages than to have them steal it. What
would happen if the companies should go out of
business?"

You can see from recent doings at the City
Hall how much there was in this argument.

The council committee on transportation, in-
stead of giving up before the fight could begin, laid
down a certain platform as indicating the plan to
be followed in dealing with the traction question.
Thus:

1. That indefinite term franchises be given
which shall be revocable by the city at any time.
2. That the whole of the systems be unified or
consolidated and the people be given the benefit of
the consolidation.
3. That universal transfers be given.
4. That better facility for cars be provided in
the downtown district by loops or through runs.
5. That overhead trolleys be abolished in the
congested districts.
6. That underground trolleys supplant cables.
7. That a subway be built in the downtown
district.
8. That lower fares be given.
9. That the police powers of the city be aug-
mented if necessary by contract.
10. That the whole proposition of intramural
transportation be embodied in a report to the city
council which shall be the basis of a franchise ordi-
nance.

We suppose there has never been in any city a
traction platform so good as this.

The "indefinite term" revocable franchise is, of
course, only another name for the Chicago Ameri-
can's plan of an annual and revocable license for
the companies. This and the rest of the commit-
tee's platform will beyond doubt receive the com-
mendation of every friend of reform in Chicago.—
Chicago American.

Social and Political Conference.

To be held at Detroit June 28 to July 4.

The program for the first three days is most
carefully digested and balanced. There will be
discussed, among other things: The Function of
the Church in Furthering Equality; How to Use
the Press, (a) Newspapers, (b) Pamphlets, Maga-
zines, Books; the Unification of Reform Forces
and Organizations, (a) How Far Desirable, (b) the
Place of Trade Unions in the Reform Movement,
(c) Relation of Temperance Organizations to Econ-
omic Reform, (d) Other Non-Partisan Organiza-
tions and Federations (e) Is Political Union Pos-
sible? American Ideals Abroad; America's Position
as to Colonies; Shall We Enlarge or Decrease the
Army and Navy? The Ruskin Hall College Move-
ment; What Can be Secured by Working Locally;
What Can be Secured by Working on State Lines;
What Can be Secured by Working on National
Lines; Should Political Reforms Precede Social
and Economic Reforms? Are Political Parties
Necessary, or Are They Obstacles to Progress? Can
Reform be Gained Through the Old Parties? The
Best Methods and Their Relative Place, (a) Papers
and Tracts, (b) Clubs and Public Speaking, (c)
Classes and Personal Work, (d) Existing Organi-
zations, (e) New Organizations.